

# The Spectrum of Prevention

**T**he Spectrum of Prevention is a tool that promotes a range of activities for effective prevention. The Spectrum is based on developmental disabilities treatment efforts. It has been used nationally in prevention initiatives targeting traffic safety, violence prevention, injury prevention, nutrition, and fitness.

The Spectrum identifies multiple levels of intervention and helps people move beyond the perception that prevention is merely education. The Spectrum is a framework for a more comprehensive understanding of prevention that includes six levels for strategy development. These levels, delineated below, are complementary and when used together produce a synergy that results in greater effectiveness than would be possible by implementing any single activity or linear initiative.

LEVEL OF SPECTRUM	DEFINITION OF LEVEL
<b>6</b> Influencing Policy and Legislation	Developing strategies to change laws and policies to influence outcomes.
<b>5</b> Changing Organizational Practices	Adopting regulations and shaping norms to improve health and safety.
<b>4</b> Fostering Coalitions and Networks	Convening groups and individuals for broader goals and greater impact.
<b>3</b> Educating Providers	Informing providers who will transmit skills and knowledge to others.
<b>2</b> Promoting Community Education	Reaching groups of people with information and resources to promote health and safety.
<b>1</b> Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills	Enhancing an individual's capability of preventing injury or illness and promoting safety

Greater Effectiveness →

Used with permission by  
Prevention Institute

265 29th Street • Oakland, CA 94611 • 510.444.7738 • fax 510.663.1280 • [www.preventioninstitute.org](http://www.preventioninstitute.org)

## Applying the Spectrum of Prevention

### 1. Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills

- (a) **Regard your own actions and behaviors honestly and objectively.** American culture often inundates males with negative values that appreciate and propagate male dominance. As males, we can be aware of this and feed those values that support positive male "norms" that will sustain, rather than destroy, our communities.
- (b) **Learn to recognize sexism, and challenge yourself to stop it when it occurs.** Sexism can be defined as culture's insistence that people have to follow certain rules about how they should act based on their gender, and that the roles of men, and men's lives, are valued, respected and rewarded at a greater rate than women's. It is the institutional and cultural

## A Few Ideas to Get You Started

notion that men are generally better than women and therefore rightly situated as primary decision makers in the home, at work, at school, in faith communities and in the government.

- (c) **Challenge and interrupt sexist and otherwise inappropriate remarks, jokes, stories, and behaviors.** We all have been in a situation in which we have heard a joke, remark, or story that made us uncomfortable. In a situation when this takes place, what was your reaction? Did you laugh politely? Did you go along with the flow in order to avoid an uncomfortable situation? Did you speak up in order to express your distaste with the inappropriateness of the remarks?

Most of us will probably never see a rape in progress. However, we will all see and hear attitudes and behaviors that degrade women and that promote rape and coercive control. We all have a moral responsibility to those around us to both safeguard the rights of individuals and to make every attempt to limit the culture of male dominance that exists in America.

- (d) **Recognize and oppose sexual harassment and sexually inappropriate behavior:** Sexual harassment is often an attempt by one individual to hold power over another. We as males can stop sexual harassment and other forms of sexually inappropriate behavior by

Imagine a world without sexual and domestic violence. What can men do to make that a reality?

recognizing it when it occurs and by voicing our concern or disapproval to its perpetrators. This can very often require nothing more than a simple statement that lets the individual know that you are aware that he or she has crossed the line of appropriateness.

- (e) **Talk with and listen to women:** In order to understand those around you, it is important to find out about them. What better way can there be to come to understand how to interact with women than by simply spending some time getting to know them? Ask women about their work lives, and ask how the risk of being raped affects their daily lives. Talk with your mother, your sister, your grandmother, your girlfriend or wife, or even your coworkers about how they are treated both in and outside of the workforce, and ask them about the kinds of things that men can do to create a community of equality. This type of communication can be beneficial in building both professional and personal relationships in that it removes uncertainty and makes sure that you and those with whom you interact are on the same page.
- (f) **Talk about sex:** Many of us grow up with unrealistic beliefs about sex: that we should instinctively know what to do: that we should be ready to achieve an erection instantly and maintain it for hours; and that it is unmasculine to have to talk about what gives us (or our partner) pleasure. These beliefs and others keep us from knowing our own sexuality and from enjoying our sexual relationships. Sex without discussion does not allow consent, or even minimal expectations, to be communicated. Sex is healthy when it reflects the free and mutual sharing of one another. When we discuss what makes us comfortable and uncomfortable and try new ways to express ourselves, we also greatly reduce the risk of sexual assault. Without mutual agreement, sex becomes rape.
- (g) **Discuss your Expectations:** Expectations are hopes crystallized by silence. Acting on our expectations without sufficient information can cause serious misunderstandings and can lead to rape. There is nothing wrong with feeling sexual desire, but all too often, we do not communicate our desires, find out our partner's feelings, or establish consent. Instead, we project our interest in sex onto our partner, we assume she or he feels as we do, and we misinterpret any friendliness as invitation. Establishing consent for sexual (or physical) contact at one point does not reduce the need to re-establish consent later. A person's consent to come to your apartment, to kiss you, or to touch you is not the same as consent to any other sexual acts. Neither do so-called nonverbal cues such as someone's winking at you, drinking with you, or starting to undress you imply consent for sex-

ual intercourse. Even if we think our partner is sending us "mixed messages" it is up to us to get clarification.

- (h) **Note your own treatment of women:** If you are emotionally, psychologically, physically, economically or sexually controlling or abusive to women, or have been in the past, seek professional help immediately.
- (i) **Be cognizant of your surroundings:** If you suspect that a woman close to you is being abused or has been sexually assaulted, gently ask if you can help.

Adapted from Men Against Sexual Violence

## 2. Promoting Community Education

- (a) **Hold** community men's meetings/forums.
- (b) **Participate** in a speakers bureau for local sexual/domestic assault centers.
- (c) **Coordinate** speakers to present at your community of faith, civic group, business luncheon, community forum, etc.
- (d) **Develop or distribute** Public Service Announcements on TV, Radio.
- (e) **Organize men's rallies** to prevent sexual and domestic violence.
- (f) **Organize fund raisers** for local victim service centers focused on prevention efforts.
- (g) **Promote men's involvement** through community accountability measures that help restore victims. These can include donated time from male therapists for women and children, pro bono work from attorneys, donated time from lock smiths, auto mechanics (to repair damage done by husbands and boyfriends), carpenters, moving companies, etc. (see organizational practice changes.)
- (h) **Participate** in local parades—having a *men preventing sexual and domestic violence* float or banner etc.
- (i) **Develop and/or distribute** social marketing materials on billboards, in magazines, in newspapers, brochures, etc.
- (j) **Develop web sites, blogs, chat rooms** etc related to men's prevention efforts and responsibilities.
- (k) **Write letters** to the editor of your local paper.

### 3. Educating Providers

- (a) **Provide training** to youth service providers on sexual respect, integrity and egalitarian relationships.
- (b) **Train health professionals** and traditional healers to discuss respectful sexual relationships with their clients.
- (c) **Train traditional healers**, health professionals and clergy about abuses of power and sexual and domestic abuse prevention.
- (d) **Train and support teachers** in all levels of education to promote positive male roles and role models.
- (e) **Work with coaches** to provide guidelines to athletes regarding competition, power, sex and privilege.
- (f) **Work with university fraternities** regarding respectful relationships and sexual integrity.
- (g) **Work with business leaders** to promote prevention strategies in their companies related to the workplace and business practices.
- (h) **Speak with clergy** and traditional healers about prevention strategies to promote from the "pulpit", during ceremony, or in counseling sessions or discussions with parishioners and/or participants in ceremony.
- (i) **Meet with politicians** (tribal and non-tribal) to educate them on how they can promote male social norms that provide for safety in our communities.
- (j) **Provide training** for youth organizations on sexual and domestic violence prevention and integrate prevention messages in all aspects of programming.

### 4. Fostering Coalitions and Networks

- (a) **Set up meetings** of other interested men in your tribe and/or community to begin exploring how you can make your community the first in the state to be free of sexual and domestic violence.
- (b) **Identify the social "norms"** that contribute to sexual and domestic violence. Identify the personal and institutional practices and policies that support those norms. Begin to collectively change those practices and policies that create an environment of sexual violence and threat.

- (c) **Call your local sexual assault and domestic violence center** and ask them how you and/or a group of local men could assist them in their efforts at prevention.
- (d) **Find other men** in your state and/or in Indian Country that are working to end sexual and domestic violence. Speak with them to gain ideas and inspiration.
- (e) **Collaborate** with other groups of men to form or participate in a broader network (regional, state, national) of diverse men working to promote male models of respect for women, children and each other.
- (f) **Develop coalitions** and networks that respect the diverse communities of men. Acknowledge the influence that sexual violence has played in subjugating one group of men by another, either by race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or other stated differences.
- (g) **Build alliances** with women's and/or victim services organizations who have been leaders in the world wide effort to prevent sexual and domestic violence.
- (h) **Locate and speak** with established men's organizations to see how they might involve themselves in sexual and domestic violence prevention activities. This could include local and state civic organizations, business groups, communities of faith, culturally specific organizations, sportsman's clubs, athletic organizations, alumni associations, etc.
- (i) **Network with state and tribal governments** and department heads to ascertain how they could participate in the effort to stop sexual and domestic violence before it begins.
- (j) **Speak with political parties** to make prevention efforts a campaign issue.
- (k) **Organize with labor unions** to take a public stand encouraging male attitudes and behaviors that promote sexual respect and dignity.

### 5. Changing Organizational Practice

- (a) **Ask if organizations** in your community have a sexual harassment policy. If not, help them put one together. If yes, how is it monitored and does it work?
- (b) **Talk to mainstream book store owners** and management about removing pornography from their collection.
- (c) **Develop/utilize tools and policies** for businesses to evaluate the workplace environment for safety and equitability.

- (d) **Develop/utilize evaluation tools and policies** for product development, marketing and sales that support a safe, healthy and sexually respectful environment.
- (e) **Do not support businesses** that create or sell products that support sexual or domestic violence or sexual subordination/objectification.
- (f) **Develop criteria for government agencies' purchasing policies** regarding vendors. For example, require that government financed conferences or events take place in hotels and convention centers that do not provide adult videos (pornography).
- (g) **Set standards** for athletic recruitment practices.
- (h) **Make job requirements for coaches** to include training for athletes on sexual and domestic violence prevention.
- (i) **Require routine training and monitoring of fraternities** and athletic teams to assess the environment as it relates to sexual and domestic violence and/or respect.
- (j) **Provide training for youth organizations** on sexual and domestic violence prevention and integrate prevention policy in all aspects of programming.
- (k) **Boy Scouts develop merit badges** on sexual integrity and respect. Develop programming on respect of women and girls and critical awareness of social messages that promote the sexual disrespect of women and girls.
- (l) **Develop and/or implement district-wide curriculum** in schools that speaks to healthy relationships and healthy sexuality predicated upon the foundations of mutual respect and value.
- (m) **Develop marketing practices** that do not sexually objectify women, children and men.
- (n) **Review how the news media reports sexual and domestic assaults.** How do they portray the crimes? Do they use language that holds the alleged offender accountable? Do they protect the identity of victims?

## 6. Influencing Policy And Legislation

- (a) **Contact your legislator** and talk about your concerns and ask what they are doing to prevent sexual and domestic violence, ie: Funding, legislative initiatives, support. (This is quite different from catching and locking up offenders. While consistent and effective intervention is critical, we want to stop the violence before it even begins.)
- (b) **Make men's participation** in the prevention of sexual and domestic violence a campaign issue.
- (c) **Review corporate citizenship** by the messages and merchandize they produce, distribute, and sell. This includes all sectors of the economy from the mass media, to video games, athletics, manufacturing, the internet, the hospitality industry, to health care.
- (d) **Tie governmental subsidies** to sexually respectful, equitable workplace policies including hiring, promotions, sexual harassment, work place violence, and marketing campaigns.
- (e) **Develop local or state ordinances** that restrict or regulate businesses which support the sexual subordination and exploitation of women and/or children, eg: Strip clubs, pornography shops.
- (f) **Provide legislation** that would include comprehensive sexuality education for youth that would include issues of consent, sexual respect and integrity.
- (g) **Create legislation** that allows individuals to sue the pornography industry if they can show that they were harmed by the manufacture, distribution, or selling of the material.